

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 13519 221853Z

67

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CU-02 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

/061 W

----- 068441

R 221422Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4736

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMCONSUL MUNICH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MOSCOW 13519

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT,UR

SUBJECT: ARTISITS WIN FIRST ROUND IN MOSCOW ART SHOW BATTLE

1. SUMMARY. UNOFFICIAL MOSCOW ART SHOW OPENED SEPTEMBER 20 BUT WAS CLOSED TEMPORARILY WHEN ARTISITS REALIZED THAT OFFICIALS HAD REMOVED ON PREVIOUS NIGHT 40 WORKS PASSED EARLIER BY EXHIBITION COMMITTEE. ENRAGED ARTISTS BEGAN REMOVING PARTINGS, AND AUTHORITIES WERE FACTED WITH ANOTHER PUBILICITY FIASCO. ARTISTS WON REHANGING OF MOST OF THE REMOVED PAINTINGS AND RELEASED OF DETAINED ARTIST IN NIGHT-TIME NEGOTIATIONS. SHOW OPENED AGAIN ON SUNDAY AND WAS WELL ATTENDED DESPITE RUMORS OF CLOSURE. MOSCOW EXHIBIT IS LARGER AND BETTER THAN LENINGRAD SHOW; RANGE OF WORKS AND NUMBERS OF ARTISITS REFLECT INCREASING CONFIDENCE IN THEIR ABILITY TO RESIST OFFICIAL PRESSURES IN POST-HELSINKI PERIOD. END SUMMARY.

2. THE OPENING. THE EXHIBIT OPENED ON SCHEDULE AT 2:00 P.M. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, BUT REMAINED OPEN FOR NO MORE THAN ONE HOUR. AT ABOUT 2:30 P.M., FOUR OR FIVE YOUNG EXHIBITORS FEVERISHLY BEGAN TAKING DOWN THEIR

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 MOSCOW 13519 221853Z

PAINTINGS, ASKED WHY, THEY EXPLAINED THAT LATE SEPTEMBER 19,

AFTER ALL ORGANIZERS AND ARTISTS HAD LEFT THE PREMISES, MOSCOW AUTHORITIES UNILATERALLY REMOVED SOME 40 PAINTINGS PRESUMABLY BECAUSE THE WORKS WERE CONSIDERED ANTI-SOVIET. "THE EXHIBIT HAS LOST ITS MEANING," ONE EXHIBITOR SAID, "AND I WILL HAVE NOTHING FURTHER TO DO WITH IT." PEOPLE STANDING IN THE ADMISSION LINE APPLAUDED THE ARTISTS AS THEY EMERGED WITH THEIR PAINTINGS.

3. AFTER FIFTEEN MINUTES OF CONFUSION, WITH A GROWING NUMBER OF ARTISTS ANGERLY TAKING DOWN THEIR WORKS, PLAINCLOTHES POLICEMEN ANNOUNCED POLITELY BUT FIRMLY OVER A PORTABLE LOUDSPEAKER THAT THE EXHIBIT WAS CLOSED FOR THE DAY. WE OBSERVED NO FORCE BEING USED, BUT THE 20-30 MILITIA AND PLAINCLOTHESMEN IN THE BUILDING CLEARED THE CROWDED EXHIBIT IN SOME FIFTEEN MINUTES. SMALL DISCUSSION GROUPS FORMED OUTSIDE OF THE BUILDING, WITH EXHIBITORS EXPLAINING THE SITUATION TO PUZZLED SPECTATORS. WORD WAS ALSO PASSED THAT THE NEXT DAY, SEPTEMBER 21, HAD BEEN PROCLAIMED "DAY OF DEFENSE OF ZELEININ" (UNOFFICIAL ARTIST ARRESTED IN VLADIMIR).

4. CONFUSION ENSUED OUTSIDE OF THE BUILDING WHEN SOME ARTISTS ANNOUNCED THAT THE EXHIBIT WAS PERMANENTLY CLOSED, A PLAINCLOTHESMAN SUBSEQUENTLY ANNOUNCED THAT THE EXHIBIT WAS AGAIN OPEN, AND THE MILITIA THEN REFUSED TO ADMIT THE CROWD THAT SURGED FORWARD TO ENTER THE BUILDING AS THE LATTER ANNOUNCEMENT WAS MADE. THERE WERE HEATED CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS AND THE AUTHORITIES, AND REPORTS THAT ONE ARTIST HAD BEEN BEATEN.

5. WE UNDERSTAND THAT NEGOTIATIONS SATURDAY EVENING BETWEEN THE UNOFFICIAL ARTISTS AND CITY AUTHORITIES OVER THE FUTURE OF THE EXHIBIT CONCLUDED WITH AGREEMENT THAT (1) ALL BUT SIX OF THE PAINTINGS REMOVED FRIDAY NIGHT WOULD BE RETURNED, AND (2) EDUARD ZELEININ WOULD BE RELEASED FROM DETENTION IN VLADIMIR (HE WAS).

6. ONE OF THE BANNED PAINTINGS WAS BY OSKAR RABIN -- WE HAVE SEEN IT IN HIS MOSCOW STUDIO -- AND DEPICTS THE FIRST TWO PAGES OF RABIN'S SOVIET INTERNAL PASSPORT, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 03 MOSCOW 13519 221853Z

OFFICIAL SEAL AND ALL. ANOTHER SHOWED MAO TSE-TUNG. A THIRD WAS A PARODY OF DETENTE, SHOWING A CONTEST BETWEEN TWO FIRE BRIGADES, ONE PUMPING BLACK LIQUID AND THE OTHER PUMPING RED. A FOURTH WAS THE BANNER OF SOME FLAMBOYANT HIPPIY PAINTERS WHICH REPORTEDLY CONTAINED A NUMBER OF RASH POLITICAL SLOGANS. STILL ANOTHER DRAWING BY ANATOLIY KALUGIN SHOWED A FISH BEING SERVED FOR DINNER, WITH A MONASTERY TUCKED INSIDE THE FISH.

7. THE SECOND DAY. WHEN THE EXHIBIT OPENED AT 11:00 A.M. SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, THE EXHIBIT HAD BEEN REARRANGED AND ALMOST ALL OF THE PAINTINGS TAKEN DOWN BY INDIVIDUAL ARTISTS WERE BACK UP. WORKS OF SOME NEW EXHIBITORS HAD BEEN ADDED. WE HEARD OF NO INCIDENTS ON SUNDAY, ALTHOUGH ONE OF THE ORGANIZERS TOLD US THAT A DELEGATION FROM THE MINISTRY OF CULTURE WOULD INSPECT THE SHOW MONDAY MORNING.

8. VISITING LENINGRAD PAINTER YEVGENIY RUKHIN SUMMED IT UP AS FOLLOWS: THIS EPISODE, HE SAID, DEMONSTRATES THE STUPIDITY OF THE CULTURAL WATCHDOGS IN MOSCOW. IN LENINGRAD, THE AUTHORITIES OBJECTED TO SOME OF THE PAINTINGS IN OUR UNOFFICIAL SHOW BUT CAME TO THE ORGANIZERS TO DISCUSS THE PROBLEM. WE WERE ABLE TO WORK OUT AN AGREEMENT WHEREBY SEVERAL PAINTINGS WERE VOLUNTARILY WITHDRAWN. JUST LOOK AT THE TROUBLE THE MOSCOW OFFICIALS CREATED FOR THEMSELVES BY TAKING A HEAVY-HANDED APPROACH.

9. THE SETTING. THE EXHIBIT IS LOCATED IN THE "HOUSE OF CULTURAL WORKERS" (DOM RABOTNIKOV KUL'TURY), TO THE RIGHT AND NORTH OF MAIN ENTRANCE TO THE PERMANENT "EXHIBITION OF ECONOMIC ACHIEVEMENTS" (VDNKH). THE BUILDING HAS TWO STORIES. PAINTINGS FILL ALMOST ALL AVAILABLE WALL-SPACE IN A LARGE DOWNSTAIRS CENTRAL HALL, TWO LARGE ROOMS ON THE SECOND FLOOR, AND THE HALLS AND CORRIDORS.

10. THE PAINTINGS. WORKS OF OVER 140 MOSCOW ARTISTS (NAMES BEING SENT BY AIRGRAM) ARE DISPLAYED. SOME ARTISTS HAVE UP TO TEN WORKS ON SHOW, MOST THREE OR FOUR. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 04 MOSCOW 13519 221853Z

A FEELING OF INTENSITY IS GENERATED BY THE LARGE NUMBER OF PAINTINGS AND BY A RICH VARIETY OF THEMES AND STYLES. THERE ARE, FOR EXAMPLE, NUDES, ABSTRACT AND EXPLICIT, INCLUDING TWO NUDE FIGURES PLAYING FRISBIE; CAREFULLY COMPOSED REPRESENTATIONAL WORKS BY OSKAR RABIN AND HIS SON ALEXANDER; LARGE, DALI-ESQUE COMPOSITIONS; TINY LITHOGRAPHS; AN ACTUAL COAT AND SCARF ON A HANGER, ENTITLED "THE COAT OF ODNORALOV" (ONE OF THE ORGANIZERS); MANY RELIGIOUS THEMES; PRIMITIVE LANDSCAPES AND PORTRAITS; GEOMETRIC AND MONOCHROMATIC ABSTRACTIONS; CAREFULLY EXECUTED GRAPHICS; AND POWERFUL DEPICTIONS OF SUFFERING AND DEATH. THE MOSCOW EXHIBIT COMPARES FAVORABLY WITH THE LENINGRAD EXHIBIT IN RANGE AND QUALITY OF WORKS. THE "KOOK" ELEMENT WAS REPRESENTED ONLY BY PROTESTING HIPPIES AND A QUARTET PERCHED ON A LARGE GRASS NEST AND

ALLEGEDLY HATCHING EGGS, AS PART OF A "SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT."

11. COMMENT. ALTHOUGH THE LAST WORK ON THE EXHIBITION CANNOT YET BE WRITTEN, AT THE MOMENT THE UNOFFICIAL ARTISTS SEEN TO BE AHEAD IN THEIR STRUGGLE WITH MOSCOW AUTHORITIES. THE ARTISTS DEMONSTRATED THEIR BARGAINING STRENGTH IN NEGOTIATING THE RETURN OF MOST OF THE SURREPTITIOUSLY REMOVED PAINTINGS AS WELL

AS THE RELEASE FROM DETENTION OF EDUARD ZELENIN. IN THE PROCESS, THEY GAINED PUBLICITY AND SUPPORT AMONG THE WESTERN NEWSMEN AND DIPLOMATS UPON WHOM THEY DEPEND FOR BOTH SUPPORT AND SALES. MANY ARTISTS WHO PREVIOUSLY SHUNNED PUBLIC EXHIBITIONS HAVE ENTERED WORKS IN MOSCOW EXHIBITION. THIS IS A RESULT OF INCREASING CONFIDENCE AMONG ARTISTS THAT THEY CAN RESIST OFFICIAL PRESSURES MORE SUCCESSFULLY NOW BECAUSE OF OFFICIAL SENSITIVITY TO WORLD PUBLIC OPINION. ARTISTS ALSO UNDERSTAND THE BENEFITS OF A LARGER AUDIENCE GAINED THROUGH EXHIBITS, AND THEY NOW HAVE A SENSE OF MOVEMENT WHICH ENCOURAGES THOSE PREVIOUSLY UNWILLING TO COMMIT THEMSELVES.
MATLOCK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CENSORSHIP, POLITICAL REPRESSION, ARTISTS, PRISONERS RELEASE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 SEP 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: WorrelSW
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MOSCOW13519
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750328-0617
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750930/aaaabaey.tel
Line Count: 192
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: WorrelSW
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 MAY 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 MAY 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <09 OCT 2003 by WorrelSW>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ARTISTS WIN FIRST ROUND IN MOSCOW ART SHOW BATTLE
TAGS: PINT, UR, (ZELENIN, EDUARD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006